

The Vine

I am the vine; you are the branches...John 15:5

A publication of Valley Falls Christian Church

August 2015

THE LIMPET AND THE ROCK

There is a little sea creature called *Notoacmaea testudinalis*. It is a little gastropod animal having arched, non spiraling shells with broad ventral openings. These little things are all over the world. They cling tenaciously to rocks and submerged timber. By the way, they are better known as limpets.

What they do is scrape out a place on a rock and cling to it. They occasionally leave the rock to forage for food, but always return. The only danger they face in life is when they are not clinging to the rock.

Charles Haddon Spurgeon made use of the limpet in the following illustration.

“Our little friend the limpet does not know much, but he clings. He cannot tell us much about what he is clinging to, is not acquainted with the geological formation of the rock, but he clings! He has found something to cling to; and with his little bit of knowledge, he uses it to cling to the rock of his salvation; it is the limpet’s life to cling. Thousands of God’s people have no more faith than this; they know to cling to Jesus with all their heart and soul and this suffices. Jesus Christ is to them a Savior strong and mighty and they cleave to him as a rock unmovable and immutable.”

“In God is my salvation and my glory: the rock of my strength, and my refuge, is in God” (Psalm 62:7).

I cannot comprehend the nature of God, but I believe (Job 9:10). God is beyond my comprehension. Where my feeble understanding fails, faith takes over. I need no deep and complicated explanation of my God in heaven in order to have a faith that keeps me in the cleft of the Rock of Ages. “From the end of the earth will I cry unto thee, when my heart is overwhelmed: lead me to the rock that is higher than I” (Psalm 61:2).

O Rock in the desert, I fly unto thee,
When tempest and storms sweep the sky.
I hide in the cleft that was riven for me,
For safety on Thee I rely.



Word of the Month: Grow

My garden hasn't done very well this summer. I don't plant a lot, but the conditions this year make for a very poor harvest (or at least a very late harvest).

Because of the rain and cool weather, I planted later than usual. Because of more rain, the plants sat in a swamp and almost died. Once the ground dried out a bit, some came back, but everything is about a month behind. It remains to be seen if the time spent planting is worth my while.

I think about growth this time of year because students are heading back to school. They have advanced to the next grade. Some are entering middle school or high school for the first time – a sure sign they are growing older.

As young people enter adulthood, they begin college or technical school if they have not already entered the work force. We grow up, then we grow old. Hopefully we grow wiser and closer to Jesus.

Jesus told a lot of parables about growing. Many have to do with the word of God taking root in the heart of a person and growing into a strong and vibrant faith.

Matthew 13 tells the story of the sower. He sowed seed on all kinds of ground (hearts). Some fell on a dry hard path. It didn't grow at all because the birds came and ate the seed. Maybe you have seen corn spilled on the pavement after a combine has loaded a truck. That seed will not grow on the pavement because it is too hard, so the birds (Satan) come and snatch it away.

Some fell on rocky soil. I just sprayed a bunch of weeds that seem to be thriving in the gravel of my driveway. It is amazing how weeds (false teaching/teachers – but that is another parable!) will thrive on a driveway but I struggle to grow peppers in a tilled garden! Even on a driveway, scorching sun and lack of rain will kill the crabgrass. The seed grows, but only for a bit and when difficulty arises, the seed of faith which has no root fails to grow any further and dies off.

Some fell on soil with weeds. When the ground was so wet I couldn't get a tiller in the garden, it looked like the weeds were going to take over. It was hard to tell where the cucumber plants were and where the weeds were. It finally dried out enough that I could get the weeds tilled under, but if I had neglected them, they would easily have overtaken the garden and choked out the good plants.

Some people allow the seed of faith to begin growing, but the worries of this world choke it out. (See Matthew 5 and Philippians 4 to read about worry and anxiety). Their heart is divided and they aren't willing to do the hard work of pulling the worldly weeds so the seed of faith can grow.

But some seed fell on good soil. The seed grew, and grew, and grew. It produced a great harvest.

There is a need for Christians in the church to grow up. As the culture continues to attack the church, the hearts of church-goers will become more evident. Testing will reveal if the heart is hard, rocky, weedy or good soil.

If our local body of Christ is to not merely survive, but thrive, we need to move from the milk of the word to the meat (Heb 5:11-14). We need to graduate from spectator to participant. We need to become disciples of Jesus Christ.

Colossians 1:10 *Walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing to him, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God.* **2 Thessalonians 1:3 (ESV)** *We ought always to give thanks to God for you, brothers, as is right, because your faith is growing abundantly, and the love of every one of you for one another is increasing.*

2 Peter 1:5-8 (ESV) *For this very reason, make every effort to supplement your faith with virtue, and virtue with knowledge, and knowledge with self-control, and self-control with steadfastness, and steadfastness with godliness, and godliness with brotherly affection, and brotherly affection with love. For if these qualities are yours and are increasing, they keep you from being ineffective or unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

So let's cultivate our heart-soil so God's kingdom can grow within us. Plow up the hard and fallow ground. Remove the rocks that keep the seed from taking root. Pull the weeds that choke out the word so we can grow. Grow in our faith. Grow in our prayer life. Grow in our Bible study. Grow in our service to others. Grow in the reputation that God is alive and well in Valley Falls and is working in a mighty way through his body here at VFCC.

2 Peter 3:18 (ESV) ¹⁸ *But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.*

Mike

Recipe Swap

LIME GELATIN SALAD

1 pkg. (6 oz.) lime gelatin
1 c. boiling water
8 oz. cream cheese, softened
½ tsp. vanilla
15 oz. mandarin oranges, drained
8 oz. crushed pineapple, drained
1 c. lemon lime soda
½ c. chopped pecans
8 oz. frozen whipped topping, thawed, divided

Dissolve gelatin in water. In a mixing bowl, beat cream cheese until fluffy. Stir in gelatin mixture and beat until smooth. Stir in vanilla, oranges, pineapple, soda and pecans. Chill until mixture mounds slightly when dropped from a spoon. Fold in three fourths of the whipped topping. Pour into a 13x9x2 inch dish. Refrigerate for 3-4 hours until firm. Cut into squares; garnish with remaining whipped topping. Yield:16-20 servings.

PRAYER REQUESTS

OUR SOLDIERS: Curtis Mitchell, Brandon Miller, Nik Byrd, Luke Cummings, Greg Morales, Ryan Kirby, Zach Stiffler, Josh Lackey, Dan Cook, Rick Heuertz, Steve Heinen, Ammin Spencer, Gates, Kobuszewski, Leslie Bolz, Austin Everhart, Noe Garza, Brandon Hammons, Ruth Churchill, Jason Cherry, Aaron Cook, Jacob Mitchell, Matthew Branam

Thomas' grandparents health
Leah and family at Tom's passing
Grace- continued health problems
Dave Eaton- cancer diagnoses
Darlene House- hospice
The building project
Steve Carson
Traveling mercies for Kirby's and family

COPIES OF THE SERMONS ARE AVAILABLE ON CD UPON REQUEST: If you would like a copy please see Mike. You can also listen to them online at www.valleyfallscc.org.

COLLECTING FOR ALPHA: Alpha Christian Children's Home can use Campbell soup UPC labels and lids, Best Choice UPC labels and General Mills Box Top Symbols coupons (Box Tops for Education.) We will have a box in the hallway outside the nursery under the mailboxes.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

2 Cody Church
4 JENNA WATKINS
Logan Wichman
6 Becky Arnold
10 Amanda Hughes
Brian Barrett
12 Austin House
Clinton & Erin Thomas (2000)
Gene & June Dedeke (2012)
14 Chris Sanders
Sarah & Chuck Toy (1971)
15 CYNTHIA MCAFEE
16 Christy (Smith) Dow
Kaitlyn Speer
17 RALPH & CINDY SHEAD (1974)
Tom & Shirley Harris (1979)
Kenzli Turner
18 Rhonda Mitchell
Linda Beightel
20 Melody Hosler
21 Carolyn Starkey
22 Caleb Gatzemeyer
24 Trichia Gatzemeyer
25 Hunter Dean McGuire
26 SARAH SHEAD
28 PHIL MCAFEE
30 Chris Dedeke
Cooper Taliaferro
Robert Kirk

(Names in CAPS in Mission Field)

Serving in August

Congregational Prayer:
Dennis Turner

Church Offerings

June 28-\$852.00

July 5-\$2683.00

2015		AUGUST					2015	
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY	
 Board Meeting after church 2:00 PM Worship Service at Midland 5:00 PM Youth Group			 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	 6	 7	 22	1	
 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group	24 31	25	26 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	27	 28 Lock in for Middle School and High School	29	15	
9 5:00 PM Youth Group	10	11 6:15 PM Worship Practice	12 6:15 PM Worship Practice	13	14	21	22	
2 Board Meeting after church 2:00 PM Worship Service at Midland 5:00 PM Youth Group	3	4 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	5	6	7	21	22	
16 10:00 AM Pocket Change for Progress 5:00 PM Youth Group	23 5:00 PM Youth Group 30 5:00 PM Youth Group	24 31	25 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	26 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	27 6:15 PM Worship Practice 7:00 PM Elders	28 Lock in for Middle School and High School	29	



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Find us on Facebook!

Mike Kirby, Pastor

You are welcome to join us!

Sunday Service times:

Bible Study (all ages) – 9:00 AM
Worship – 10:00 AM
Youth Group – 5:00 PM

Midweek Bible Study:

Wednesday 7:00 PM

GO AHEAD—START A PROBLEM

The good Lord knows that churches of Christ have had problems, most of which had disastrous results. But some church problems should be energetically sought. What kind? Consider:

The problem of not enough parking spaces, class rooms and pews. Wouldn't it be great if we ran out of them?

The problem of requests for so many home Bible studies we can't handle them. What if we had so many people asking us to teach them the word of God we had to put some of them on a waiting list? Would that be great or what!

The problem of too many members of the church wanting to teach Bible classes. Wouldn't it be awesome if we had to take numbers and wait in line just to get to

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

teach the Bible?

The problem of so many youngsters who attend Bible classes we need to add on some classrooms. We need such a problem now!

The problem of wanting to support more evangelists than are available to go into hard places to preach. What a lift it would be if we had so much surplus money that we had to seek out men to support.

The problem of preachers debating the best way to do personal evangelism and convincing sinners to believe in Christ, repent of their sins and be baptized.

You agree these are good problems? You also agree we have had more than enough of the other kind? If you can cause us to have these problems, have at it.